



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

St John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy

Old Abbot Road, Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 4HX

School URN:	137908
Inspection Date:	22 March 2019
Inspectors:	Mr Chris Maher and Mrs Louise Wilson

Overall Effectiveness	Previous Inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This Inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Requires Improvement	3
Collective Worship:		Outstanding	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy is a Catholic school that requires improvement.

- The overall effectiveness of the school requires improvement. This is as a result of standards in Religious Education. Attainment is below the diocesan average for the last three years and progress in Religious Education for the last three years has been less than good. The improvements made by leaders are embryonic and have not yet had the chance to demonstrate the impact needed.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The energy and dynamic leadership of the headteacher provides a source of inspiration to the whole school community. As a result of this strong, dynamic and energetic leadership Catholic Life is in the fabric of the school. The Catholic Life of the school is promoted at all levels; there is exceptional contribution to this by the lay chaplain.
- The quality of Religious Education requires improvement. The subject leader for Religious Education has brought about changes for teaching and learning in recent months, these changes have not yet had a sustained impact on the quality of pupils' work and the progress they make over time. The monitoring of leaders and challenge from local governors on Religious Education is in its infancy and is not yet embedded.
- Collective Worship is outstanding. Morning and end of the school day prayer takes place daily for staff and pupils. Senior leaders show their commitment to Collective Worship on a daily basis and are true witnesses. Appropriate and effective training for staff, by the lay chaplain helps to ensure that Collective Worship remains central to the life and core purpose of the school.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St John Houghton is a smaller than average secondary school with 657 pupils on roll.
- On 1 September 2018, St John Houghton joined the newly formed St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, having previously been part of the St Robert Lawrence Catholic Academy Trust.
- The school serves the parishes of Our Lady and St Thomas of Hereford in Ilkeston, St Francis of Assisi in Long Eaton and Our Lady of Good Counsel in Eastwood.
- 52% of pupils attending the school are baptised Catholics; 32% are from other Christian backgrounds. 1% of pupils are from other faith backgrounds and 15% have no religious affiliation.
- The percentage of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is 21%; this is above the national average.
- 11% of pupils are at the 'school support' stage of the special educational needs and/or disabilities register and 20 pupils have an EHCP/ support plan. This is below the national average.
- The recently appointed executive headteacher took up post in January 2019.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Catholic Life:
 - Provide more regular opportunities for pupils to be involved with the local parishes.
 - Ensure leaders at all levels, including local governors, engage in the monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Catholic Life that is systematic and robust and that leads to well-targeted and planned improvements that further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- Religious Education:
 - Further develop and embed strategies to improve progress for boys, disadvantaged and SEND pupils so that their progress is at least in line with that of other pupils.
 - Improve the quality and consistency of feedback and associated pupil response to enable all pupils to make better progress in Religious Education.
 - The pace of teaching needs to match the learning taking place and allow for opportunities for deeper learning and discussions within lessons, so that pace does not become the driving factor in teaching.
 - Teachers need to use assessments to plan the learning in lessons and ensure that all lessons are carefully pitched to promote the appropriate level of challenge for all pupils.
 - Leaders and local governors should improve systems to monitor the quality of Religious Education to ensure that areas for development are accurately identified and that work to address these areas is carefully evaluated. Local governors need to be secure that improvement priorities have been acted upon and are having a positive impact on improving outcomes.
- Collective Worship:
 - Provide more opportunities within Collective Worship for pupils to experience deep reflections and to leave Acts of Worship with a sense of mission and purpose in order to have an impact on the wider community.
 - Leaders now need to ensure that systems are in place to ensure that the views of local governors and parents/carers regarding the quality and significance of Collective Worship in school are regularly sought and acted upon.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL	1
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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- Overwhelmingly, pupils show a deep appreciation for the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They enthusiastically embrace the demands that membership of the school community entails. They are very much at the centre of shaping the Catholic Life of the school and its mission. As one pupil said, 'We are a community, one family, one knot of people in which Christ is at the centre and we grow in our faith here'.
- All pupils show a profound respect for themselves and others. Pupils speak confidently and with genuine conviction about the 'St John Houghton Way', that sets out the expectations for all stakeholders within the school and which has been highly effective in building a strong sense of mission, responsibility and community. The behaviour of all pupils is exemplary.
- Opportunities for pupils to contribute to the planning and development of the Catholic Life of the school are numerous and pupils are proud to be part of the various pupil groups including, the chaplaincy team, the Oasis team, the bereavement group and the Justice and Peace group amongst others. Pupils are alert to the needs of others and actively support global and local charitable groups such as Fair Trade and Share Wear. They enthusiastically offer themselves in the service of others.
- Pupils strongly value the school's lay chaplaincy provision. They speak enthusiastically about the work and support of the school's lay chaplain who acts as an outstanding role model to pupils. Pupils have a wealth of opportunity to participate in visits and retreats and the school ensures that it participates actively in diocesan activities and events such as the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes each year and Flame. The recent appointment of parish ambassadors offers the potential to further strengthen links with local parishes.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- The school's mission statement, 'learning without limits' is firmly set in the context of the educational mission of the Church and seeks to 'ensure all children have opportunity to succeed as sons and daughters of God'. Pupils confidently articulate what the mission statement means to them and how they live out this mission by developing confidence in themselves and others.
- Staff are strongly supportive of the school's mission and its Catholic Life. The induction for staff into the school has a very positive impact on the Catholic Life of the school.
- All staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models of mutual respect and forgiveness rooted in the 'St John Houghton Way.' The headteacher provides an outstanding role model as a Catholic leader to her school community, setting the tone and expectation of others.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, caring for our common home and respecting that the dignity of every human person is lived out authentically across the school. The 'Give Back Day' confirmed the strong sense of pride and responsibility pupils feel for their school community.
- Lay chaplaincy provision is a strength of the school. The lay chaplain is gently ambitious for the further development of the Catholic Life of the school and is committed to providing a vast range of opportunities through prayer, retreats, diocesan events and pilgrimages for pupils and staff to encounter the person of Jesus Christ and grow more deeply in their relationship with him.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place to provide high quality pastoral care to all pupils. The Emmaus Project provides additional personalised provision for the most vulnerable pupils who engage positively and feel valued members of the school community.
- Pastoral programmes, including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) have been thoughtfully planned and celebrate Catholic teachings and principles. The school provides extensive opportunities for the moral and spiritual development of the pupils and staff through daily prayer, liturgy and retreats.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- The school's leadership is deeply committed to Church's mission in education. The energy and dynamic leadership of the headteacher provides a source of inspiration to the whole school community.
- The provision for Catholic Life is seen as the key priority for the school as reflected by the school development plan. More systematic self-evaluation of the school will ensure that improvement priorities are more sharply focused and lead to planned improvements.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) relating to the Catholic Life of the school occurs regularly and is engaging. As a result, there is a shared understanding and common sense of purpose amongst staff in relation to the purpose and value of Catholic education.
- The local governing body is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school. Minutes of local governing body meetings confirm that Catholic Life is a key priority for the school and that they hold leaders to account.
- Local governors recognise that they need to engage further in the monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Catholic Life to ensure that it is systematic, robust and that it leads to well-targeted and planned improvements that enhance the Catholic Life of the school further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	3
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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education – requires improvement

- The improvement of pupils' attainment in Religious Education was a target for the school from the last inspection. However, attainment has been below the diocesan average for the last three years. In 2016, GCSE attainment was 49% at grade A*-C. In 2017, attainment was 53% at grade A*-C and in 2018, attainment was 58% grade 4+.
- Progress in GCSE Religious Education for the last three years is also less than good. In 2016, the FFT average point score for Religious Education was -0.57. In 2017, it was -0.85 and in 2018, -0.62 (an average point score of above zero would represent good or positive pupil progress. All groups of pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds are making less than good progress in Religious Education. In 2018, the average point score for disadvantaged pupils was -1.08.
- During most lessons observed, pupils were engaged in a number of activities which promoted learning. They demonstrated good behaviour for learning and spoke positively about Religious Education lessons.
- Pupils work well in lessons and show an understanding of what they are doing, however when asked, they found it difficult to explain how they could improve their work. Most pupils, relative to their age, displayed a good level of religious knowledge and language.
- The quality of most pupils' current work is good, however, for some pupils, particularly boys, presentation requires improvement and teachers need to check carefully that they are completing classwork at regular intervals.
- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and do recognise the subject as an important subject in the school. They are particularly positive about the new classrooms and have noticed a different approach to the teaching of Religious Education since September.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education – requires improvement

- The recent improvements in the consistent approach to learning activities have not yet had an impact on outcomes. The teaching and learning observed was relatively consistent, however, the same learning activities are completed by all pupils regardless of ability and therefore, higher ability pupils are not being challenged effectively in Religious Education.
- Under the purposeful leadership of the subject leader for Religious Education, the quality of teaching and pace of learning has been a focus. However, due to the task driven focus of the learning many opportunities were lost for pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding. The pace of learning needs to match the intended learning outcome.
- Teachers are confident in their subject expertise and in the effective lessons a wider range of teaching strategies were used to engage pupils. The Religious Education department should look to develop a wider range of approaches to learning in order to allow pupils to explore the topics through discussion.
- In the best lessons, assessment for learning was used effectively; however, this was not consistent across the department. For example, questioning in most lessons was often closed and despite a large number of pupils being asked questions, their responses were often short and lacked depth. As a result, opportunities are missed in some lessons for pupils to acquire deeper knowledge.
- Teachers need to use assessments to plan the learning in lessons and ensure that all lessons are carefully pitched to promote the appropriate level of challenge for all pupils.
- Feedback in Religious Education requires improvement; much of the feedback in books was pupils' self-assessment. In some books, there was very little response to feedback from the pupils and as a result of this, the response to feedback is not having the desired impact on progress.

The extent to which leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education – requires improvement

- Leaders and local governors share a common purpose and understanding for the importance of Religious Education. Religious Education shares a significant place within the school and is seen by all as a core subject.
- The subject leader for Religious Education has a strong vision for the department, particularly regarding improving teaching and learning. Leaders are now supporting teachers within the department to improve their teaching and learning through a coaching programme.
- Leaders and local governors ensure that Religious Education is comparable with other core subjects in terms of resourcing, staffing, professional development and accommodation. This is particularly evident in the significance the school has placed on the subject by providing a new suite of classrooms for the department.
- Local governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is accurate; however, their monitoring of Religious Education is in its infancy. A systematic approach is needed to the monitoring of Religious Education by local governors so that they can hold leaders to account effectively.
- Leaders are now monitoring and challenging the Religious Education department; however, this level of intensive monitoring is recent and is only just beginning to have a notable impact on standards.
- Leaders and local governors need to continue to focus on pupil groups to ensure that they make progress which is at least in line with other pupil group in the school from their starting points.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	1
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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for the Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship – outstanding

- Daily prayer plays an important part in the life of the school. Pupils lead prayer and are provided with opportunities for spontaneous prayer. They are well supported by the resources that are provided by the lay chaplain.
- Pupils readily take the initiative in leading worship displaying confidence and enthusiasm. The Collective Worship observed was led by the Justice and Peace group and the reading group focusing on discovering Jesus in Lent. It was prayerful and provided the opportunity for every pupil to participate in a meaningful way. To develop the Collective Worship further, a ‘mission’ was needed to send the pupils out into the community.
- Pupils spoke passionately about their faith experience in Collective Worship. They have a wide variety of experiences from contemporary to traditional prayer during Collective Worship.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of how to plan Collective Worship. They understand the Church’s liturgical year and confidently ensure that prayer and liturgy are in harmony with the seasons of the liturgical year.
- Pupils have some opportunity to reflect on and evaluate Collective Worship. Further training for pupils would ensure that evaluation is based on success criteria that are readily understood by all pupils.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship – outstanding

- Collective Worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical season and the Church's mission in education.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is a key part of every school celebration. The school's lay chaplain plays a major role in ensuring that Collective Worship is rich and varied.
- Pupils' liturgical formation is well planned; it is appropriate to their faith backgrounds and shows progression. Pupils are thoughtful in their planned Collective Worship and their peers are inspired by them as they provide a variety of experiences such as use of scripture, videos, drama, singing and liturgical music as well as traditional forms of prayer.
- The lay chaplain has an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and is passionate about ensuring that pupils have high quality experiences of the Church's liturgical life both in school, across the diocese and beyond.
- Training for staff has equipped them with the skills to support pupils effectively with the planning and delivery of quality worship. The weekly prayer resources from the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust lead lay chaplain are used creatively by pupils and offer those responsible for the planning and delivery of worship a variety of methods of prayer and worship.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship – outstanding

- Leaders and the Lay chaplain have an expert knowledge on how to plan and deliver high quality Collective Worship. The school is a prayerful community and leaders are skillful at providing an outstanding provision across a variety of liturgical events.
- Leaders are very visible as leaders of Collective Worship in the school. They are models of outstanding practice for staff and pupils alike.
- Collective Worship is recognised as being an integral part of school life and it is continually enhanced by the high quality of professional development on offer to staff. It regularly forms part of inset training and new staff particularly benefit from the training they receive from the lay chaplain.
- The monitoring of Collective Worship is undertaken frequently and rigorously by school leaders and pupils. Collective Worship is monitored by different pupils in each one; they are provided with an evaluation sheet and make recommendations for improvement.
- Leaders now need to ensure that systems are in place to ensure that the views of local governors and parents/carers regarding the quality and significance of Collective Worship in school are regularly sought and acted upon.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	St John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number	137908
CMAT	St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law in accordance with the *Evaluation Schedule (September 2018)* for diocesan canonical inspections in the Diocese of Nottingham. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule is in line with the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA).

During the inspection, the inspectors observed 9 Religious Education lessons, 1 Act of Collective Worship and 4 Acts of Worship in form time.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, the chair of governors and the parish priest. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including reports of the local governing body, action plans, the school development plan, monitoring forms, assessment information and parental response forms. Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Cathy Gabriel
Executive Headteacher:	Mr Kevin Gritton
Headteacher:	Mrs Joan McCarthy
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WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires Improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

Grade 1	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
Grade 2	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, and there are aspects that require improvement. There will be a monitoring visit within the next 18 months and the school will be re-inspected within 3 years.
Grade 4	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy as a Catholic school. The school will receive an annual monitoring visit and will be re-inspected within 3 years.